

Thurs. Nov. 27 is Thanksgiving



Holiday

TIPS FOR COOKING A SAFE BIRD

KEEP your Thanksgiving poison-free. The U.S. Department of Agriculture outlines food-handling tips to help cooks prepare turkeys that won't cause sickness. By following four steps — clean, separate, cook and chill — Thanksgiving dinner can be delicious and safe.

Clean – Wash hands with hot, soapy water before and after handling poultry. Thoroughly clean cutting boards, work surfaces and utensils that come in contact with poultry.

Separate – Keep poultry away from food that won't be cooked. Never place cooked food on an unwashed plate that previously held raw poultry.

Cook – Use a food thermometer to ensure that the turkey has been cooked at a temperature that's high enough to destroy bacteria. The temperature inside a whole turkey should reach 180 degrees Fahrenheit between the breast and the innermost part of the thigh. The turkey breast temperature should reach 170 degrees in the thickest part of the breast. Turkey thighs and wings should reach 180 degrees in the thickest part of the meat. Stuffing, cooked alone or in the bird, should reach 165 degrees in the center.

Chill – Refrigerate or freeze leftovers within two hours to keep foodborne bacteria from growing.

— U.S. Department of Agriculture



For more guidelines call the USDA's Meat and Poultry Hotline at (888) 674-6854 or visit www.fsis.usda.gov.

KICK THE HABIT

READY to quit? Join the millions of smokers who say “no” to cigarettes Nov. 20 during the 26th annual Great American Smokeout. The event encourages smokers to kick the habit for 24 hours in hopes they'll give it up for good.

Smoking is the leading preventable cause of death in the United States. The American Cancer Society estimates that 47 million American adults smoke. Cigarettes and their smoke contain more than 4,000 chemicals, including 43 known to cause cancer.

If the risk of lung cancer isn't reason enough to quit, consider that smokers are more likely to have:

- premature wrinkling,
- stained teeth,
- bad breath,
- brittle bones, and
- yellow fingernails.

Smokers who cling to this deadly addiction for stress relief may want to consider replacing tobacco with exercise, since quitters who stay active are more likely to stay motivated.



Check your installation health clinic for smoking-cessation classes and local Smokeout events, and for more information visit www.cancer.org or www.cdc.gov/tobacco

Health

CHILDHOOD OBESITY ON THE RISE ►

OBESITY is epidemic in the United States, according to the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Today there are nearly twice as many overweight children and almost three times as many overweight adolescents as in 1980. Results of the 1999 National Health and Nutrition Examination revealed that 13 percent of children and adolescents were overweight. The major causes are poor dietary habits and inactivity.

Beyond being teased and having low self-esteem, overweight children are more likely

Eat Right & Exercise

to suffer from high blood pressure, asthma, type 2 diabetes, orthopedic complications, hypertension and sleep apnea.

Parents can encourage healthy lifestyles in children by creating safe food environments and fostering positive behaviors about weight, experts say. Get rid of tempting snacks and sodas, and expose children to a variety of healthy foods. Parents should also encourage children to spend at least 30 minutes playing outside and limit the time they watch TV.



For more information and tips on weight maintenance, check out www.cdc.gov and www.obesity.org.

JOIN A CLUB

VETERANS service organizations give veterans a chance to connect to other veterans and share experiences. VSOs also give veterans a way to network and encourage patriotism in civilian communities. Some VSOs offer such special benefits as scholarships for family members and discounts on goods and services.



To locate a VSO near you, check out the Department of Veterans Affairs' online directory at www.va.gov/vso

HAPPY VETERANS DAY

VETERANS Day was formerly called "Armistice Day," and has been celebrated since 1926 to honor those who have served in America's armed forces.

